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Transcript of Interview of Jim Garrison by William L. Oltmans,
Telecast in The Hague, Dutch TV (NTS) 22 February 1968

(Introduction in Dutch)

OLTMANS: Mr. Garrison, what, in your opinion, and who, have been behind and what motive of the killing of President Kennedy?

GARRISON: Let me answer then by putting it in two parts. First, let's talk about who killed President Kennedy, and then second we'll talk about the reasons. President Kennedy was killed by elements of the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States Government. I'm sure that to some people this will sound like a strong statement, but it's true. And I might add that there's been a pretty successful effort, I guess, by the United States Government and some press agencies to try and make me appear irresponsible, but my office has never lost a murder case in six years. We have never lost a major case of any kind. The point I'm making is that we have been pretty successful in evaluating our cases. And having made that point, let me go on.

The Central Intelligence Agency and elements involved in the assassination have worked for a long time creating the tableau, the cover scene, before hand. This is standard for a Central Intelligence Agency assassination. As a matter of fact, the CIA, when it conducts an assassination, it describes it as an executive action. This takes the sin out of it. As a matter of fact, to the CIA employee the sin then becomes failing to do your job properly in an executive action. Of course, even as I describe it, I'm conscious of the parallels with regard to Germany under Hitler.

What I'm talking about is nothing less than fascism which has arrived in America, I'm sorry to say. But it's true, and it's arrived in the form of the -- of the Central Intelligence Agency, which is our fascist alter ego. We have, parenthetically, a constitution which has been very effective and a very good constitution, which is no longer relevant because we have developed on the side, on the outside of the constitution a major government agency which is more powerful than the rest of the government combined -- the Central Intelligence Agency. Anyway, the CIA, as I think the entire world knows, so I'm not saying any secrets, if I knew it as a secret I wouldn't feel free to say it because I'm not trying to hurt my country, but I'm trying to tell the truth. Perhaps it will save my country but I don't know if I can get it out in time. But anyway

OLTMANS: What do you mean get it out in time?

GARRISON: Well, I don't think it is possible for anyone to investigate the death of President Kennedy as effectively as we have and to continue to bring the truth out and to survive. Because the same force, the same power that killed President Kennedy, the way you would kill a fly, still exists. It's the warfare state that has developed here and it's obvious that it's not going to tolerate the truth being brought out. On the other hand, I am not going to back up and we're going to try to bring out the truth. What I'm trying to say is I feel we have a time problem and I have to try and do it as effectively as I can. Anyway to go back to the CIA.

The CIA has developed a technique now for many years of employing a cover when it assassinates someone. In other words, if you're going to have an ambush, it is standard operating procedure that after the ambush there will be somebody else that has been set up before that can be grabbed. Always a Communist. I mean all Communists are automatically the villain. As a matter of fact, there is kind of a problem of stimulating enough hate over here for Communists because we haven't seen any Communists for 25 years. We don't even have a Communist Party. We're not even sure if there are any Communists left in this hemisphere but nevertheless you have this constant -- constant propaganda pounding away from Washington about the Holy War that must be fought against Communists all over the world. Of course, I don't happen to be for the Communists, I prefer democracy.

The point is that there's one thing just as bad as Communism and the name of that is fascism. And Communism is always used by fascism as the excuse for destroying democracy. Germany under Hitler was not Communist but it was worse than if it were Communist. Because using the fear of Communism Hitler built up the fascists and unfortunately I'm afraid that things have come to pass where in America today we have developed a new kind of fascism born in prosperity, a sort of liberal fascism in a sense which has no jackboots, no "Horst Wessel" songs but has its own kind of concentration camps of the mind. We don't have Buchenwalds, not yet. But we have napalm. In other words we have a, as if -- as if a true democracy which is what we once were, as if a true democracy, could possibly use napalm against other human beings. We should have known that was the give away. That was the give away. When the government doesn't care what it's doing to other human beings because it has the power to do it then you have fascism.

The danger in fascism is not its lack of symmetry, is not because it's less attractive than a democracy but because the government is going to do whatever it wants to and once you reach a point where the government can do whatever it wants to and has that much power then you have a situation

of extreme danger and when that power is as immense as the power of the United States today, then it is a danger for the entire world because -- because with foreign policy decisions being made as a practical matter by the Central Intelligence Agency (and it makes them in this sense by repeatedly presenting the rest of the government with limited alternatives like the Bay of Pigs), what you have is the unexamined unconsidered formation of foreign policy by men who are totally unqualified to do it, who have a twisted view of the world and of their role in the world and are determined to conduct a Holy War against Communism no matter what happens to the world.

OLTMANS: You mean out of CIA Headquarters?

GARRISON: Out of CIA Headquarters.

OLTMANS: How did you get involved in this scandal? Was this by accident? How did you come

GARRISON: Yes, we have never pretended to be great investigators. The only thing we can claim is, it's kind of hard to push us around and we don't -- we don't step back, but we don't claim to be great investigators. Right after the assassination we got the staff down here and we always do this when there is an unusual crime if we think there is any New Orleans aspect. Immediately we saw on the TV and this was where Oswald, the lone assassin -- of course he had nothing to do with the assassination, he was a victim too -- saw that he had been in New Orleans; so we started going through our files and looking into other odd characters to see if we could find something else that might have happened. And we stumbled on the fact that David Ferrie, a rather odd person who

OLTMANS: . . . is dead already.

GARRISON: Who is dead, Yes, he died under peculiar circumstances. But he realized before he died that we had involved him and that was rather clear. But David Ferrie, the afternoon of the assassination, made a very strange trip to Texas; but he went to South Texas, to Houston. I got curious about that, and I learned he had driven through a thunder storm for nine hours, ostensibly to go ice skating. I thought that was unusual; so we had a stake-out waiting outside of his house. We found guns inside of his house, maps of Cuba, all kinds of odd things which are now -- were connected with his role as a Central Intelligence Agency employee. And when he came back several days later, we arrested him and turned him over to the FBI.

Well the FBI wasn't interested, and they questioned him a little. The Secret Service questioned him a little more. Mainly about whether or not

he loaned his library card to Lee Oswald. We've learned from a separate source but we have not confirmed it -- we've learned from a separate source that there is reason to believe that Dave Ferrie's library card was found on Lee Oswald when Oswald was arrested, but since been destroyed like such evidence has been. Anyway, the FBI said in effect to us: We've looked into it, and Ferrie has no connection. So I turned my mind away from it and I believed the Warren Commission. As a matter of fact it didn't even occur to me that the President would lie or that the Chief Justice would lie or these men on the Warren Commission. Although now I know that they have lied. That everyone of them had to know that Oswald was not the lone assassin. Everyone of them had to know that the President and the entire Warren Commission had to know that the Central Intelligence Agency killed John Kennedy.

OLTMANS: In other words, President Johnson knows this too?

GARRISON: Yes, he had to know, of course. He had to know it. Otherwise he would have not appointed a committee consisting of Allen Dulles, the former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, Senator Richard Russell, who's on the Watchdog Committee -- well, it's actually the Financial Committee for the Central Intelligence Agency in the Senate, Congressman Gerald Ford, who is known as the best friend of the CIA in the House, and John J. McCloy, who is head of the OSS which became the CIA. It's the CIA protective committee. In other words, they knew then that the Central Intelligence Agency had done it. They knew that. The President had to know in order to make that kind of selection. Anyway I didn't question it at all and concluded the Warren Commission had looked into it and they assured us it was just Oswald.

Then what happens, it's about 15 months ago, I was talking to Senator Long in Washington and he mentioned to me that he really didn't think that Lee Oswald had killed the President, and I was astonished that a Senator in Washington would have some doubts about the Warren Commission, and on the way back from New York I decided to look into it again just to make sure, and the first thing we did was to go back to Ferrie's trip, and we found out immediately, by digging into it further, that when Ferrie had got to the skating rink the next day in Houston, he didn't go ice skating at all but spent several hours standing next to a telephone waiting for a call. Went all the way there and then drove all the way back.

Then we found other strange traffic patterns that connected people with Dallas, in Dallas, going through Houston at the same time. Then we found other people making strange midnight rides from Houston to New Orleans and then from New Orleans to Fort Worth. Then pretty soon we found a structure of, first, strange traffic patterns and then curious relationships and to make a long story short, we found our way into a Central Intelligence Agency operation.

That was the longest thing of all. Even after -- I might say that even after we saw the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency, at first we couldn't believe it. Couldn't believe it. So that when I first mentioned that CIA men were involved even though there are indications they're presently on salary -- still with CIA -- I couldn't believe it myself; so I described them as former CIA men because I couldn't believe it. So what we did as time went on was to go through the background of every individual as we identified them, whether we found them on the grassy knoll, and we located them through so many different ways and it took so many hours that I can't go into how we did it but we've identified one after another that's involved in every case without any exception, you lead back -- you find the point where they became either outright members of the Central Intelligence Agency or were performing functions which made that clear or had admitted it earlier to other people.

For example, David Ferrie's name is known as a co-conspirator, was training pilots in Guatemala before the Bay of Pigs. So he was working for the Central Intelligence Agency. Subsequent to the Bay of Pigs, David Ferrie was given the assignment as pilot of a crew to assassinate Fidel Castro. Now I might add, if I had been privy to such plans, if I had knew about it on a governmental level, I would not feel free to bring it out. But I have discovered this in the course of investigating the murder of a President and I think the world should know about it. If we're in the business of assassination, then I think the sooner the world knows about it, the better chance there is that the Central Intelligence Agency will stop assassinating people.

OLTMANS: Then, Mr. Garrison, Lee Harvey Oswald was also working for the CIA?

GARRISON: Yes, in other words, I might go on to say Ferrie has admitted to a number of individuals that finally -- that finally admitted to us after long last that the CIA connection, the relationship of Lee Oswald and the Central Intelligence Agency, is so explicit that the evidence is much more than unique, but he was -- he was set up even before he came back from Russia because he was such a beautiful decoy. He'd gone to Russia under orders from the United States Government. Which, incidentally, gives you an idea of the compassion which fascism has for the human race. Actually, you might say in a sense that the problem of fascism is that it is power without compassion. And the casual murder of Oswald after the equally casual murder of John Kennedy is an eloquent example of how fascism has no compassion at all. It was useful to murder Oswald, and even though he had worked for the Central Intelligence Agency in Russia, he was eliminated like that and then publicly and officially identified as a Communist assassin, forever, when they knew he wasn't anything

of the kind. As a matter of fact, the indications are, we have found positive evidence, for example, that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was notified on Sunday, the 17th of November, that an attempt would be made to assassinate the President in Dallas. This telegram went to all Southern Regional offices of the Bureau.

OLTMANS: You have proof of that?

GARRISON: Yes, we have proof of that. As a matter of fact, the usual source of such information would be from an informer. We have reason to believe that the informer that gave that information to the FBI was Lee Harvey Oswald. Because this happens to be the Sunday that he was missing from North Beckley Street and also missing from Irving, Texas. Some sort of meeting was taking place. That evening the Bureau was notified, and the telegrams went out to all Southern Regional offices, including New Orleans. Nevertheless, the President was allowed to go in the parade and the top of his head was torn off. Subsequently, instructions came down that these such informations didn't happen and the telegrams disappeared. But anyway the point about Oswald is he was clearly a government employee.

As a matter of fact, a number of the individuals involved in the assassination ended up being witnesses for the Warren Commission. Some of the witnesses for the Warren Commission, whose names I'd rather not give now, are Central Intelligence Agency employees who knew Oswald and knew him in a friendly way and are now playing roles in order to put the lid on it. Why are they doing this? Because they're owned by the CIA. And I'll tell you about how they operate that in a minute.

OLTMANS: The CIA functions as separate government within the U.S. Government then?

GARRISON: Well, in a sense. When the CIA was initiated 20 years ago, the intention was to try and create an effective intelligence agency because we have had problems for years with effective intelligence, so I judge. However, somewhere along the way the objective seems to have been lost sight of and gradually it acquired so much power that a separate government in a sense has developed which is engrafted onto our regular government.

But this government does not have the constitutional limitations. Now, the function of a constitution, of course, is to protect the individual from the government. Every country has to have a constitution because of the nature of the human being, so that the human being in control of the government will not run away with the government. The constitution preserves rights of individuals and is very effective in this country with regard to Congress and with regard to the Supreme Court and to some extent with regard to the Presidency. But now

what we have is a -- is a structure which is grafted onto our regular government, which is for all practical purposes invisible and which in some ways is more powerful than the rest of government. It does not have checks and balances. Congress does not control it. The President is too busy to control it. Meanwhile the same government has become interlaced with the -- with the other components of the industrial warfare state that President Eisenhower warned about, the massive war industries, the other elements of the war machine, the Generals and their vested interests and it becomes a power complex of its own which is self-sustaining. And in a sense -- in a sense I think we've reached a point in which this complex controls the rest of the government along with it. It's as if -- it's as if this complex is now in a sort of orbit, an orbit, and anyone who tries to pull the juggernaut, to pull the juggernaut out of orbit or to change its orbit is probably going to have his head torn off.

OLTMANS: So you would be able probably to say this, then: John F. Kennedy was in a way disturbing the plans of this establishment of the CIA, of these vested interests that you just mentioned?

GARRISON: Not just in a way, we can say it more specifically than that. The contradiction between the foreign policy of John F. Kennedy and the unofficial foreign policy of the Central Intelligence Agency and the warfare state conflict was a very sharp contradiction. The Cold War had been steadily escalating and the warfare machine had been steadily building, the bombs were getting larger and larger, the prospects for war were increasing, and all the while we didn't realize it but certain forces in our country were developing a vested interest in the continuation of this tension, a vested interest comprised of many things not merely economic but emotional but this structure that develops, this need develops, to continue, on the part of some forces, to continue the Cold War. So what you have is a self-sustaining juggernaut.

John Kennedy made a radical effort to bring this country to the brink of peace, and this is why he was killed. Let me give you some examples. The CIA had worked for years to try and set up an invasion of Cuba. The CIA subsequent to the Bay of Pigs worked very hard to set up the assassination of Fidel Castro, since to the CIA assassination is just an extension of intelligence. I don't see that. I don't understand that kind of thinking, but I'm afraid that's the way they think.

(Some comments in Dutch)

(Music)

(Short introduction in Dutch)

GARRISON: President Kennedy was in the process of not only reaching a detente with Cuba but considering the possibility of recognizing Cuba.

John Kennedy was in the process of reaching new understandings with Soviet Russia, and he indicated this by his speech at the American University in this country on June the 10th in which he stated that we breath the same air as the Russians. Of course, that's true, and I think it was about time that somebody in Washington mentioned that.

But to the Central Intelligence Agency, I think -- to this power complex -- these are traitorous words. These were the kinds of things they didn't want to hear. Furthermore, President Kennedy was re-examining our approach to the China problem. He was -- he was -- he pushed through the nuclear test ban treaty, and above all he was -- he was bringing back troops from Asia, he was reducing the troops in Asia. He had reduced them between August the first, 1963, and October first, 1963. He brought back a thousand troops from South Vietnam and one of his last orders before he was murdered was to further reduce the troops in Vietnam, which would have placed it under 15,000. So what he was doing was removing troops from Asia and decreasing the likelihood of a land war in Asia. Obviously there are forces in this country, and one of them is the CIA, which are committed to a land war in Asia, with or without hydrogen bombs. So here you have a situation in which the President of the United States was from the point of view of this complex reducing the involvement, the engagement with Communism, in effect ending the Cold War. And that's why they killed him.

OLTMANS: Am I right that you yourself volunteered when the Korean War in Asia was on in the 50's?

GARRISON: I not only volunteered, I requested combat duty. I was a pilot for the field artillery in France and Germany in World War II; and when the Korean War came, I requested combat duty. Until 18 months ago I'm afraid I never, until I learned in this case how my government lies, until I learned in this case the massive fraud that was perpetrated by the Warren Commission, and until I learned in this case why John Kennedy was killed, it never occurred to me that fascism had arrived here. And I was perfectly ready to go to war in Vietnam too.

I don't want to be in a position of saying too many critical things about my government because I love my country, but I must make the point, at least perhaps through Europe, because I can't get it out in America. The press has now reached a point of such control by the Central Intelligence Agency that we literally cannot get the truth out. They have smothered us in. Sometimes we get the truth out to Europe and it comes back in; but if we send a news release, and we don't send as many as you might think, but if we send it up to New York, nothing reaches New York, nothing reaches New York.

So what I'm telling you there is, I'm saying things that are critical about my country only because I'm trying to get the word out that something is

just do it in a different way, a different town, perhaps it will be an accident the next time, or another Communist, but he will be assassinated. Because this suggestion is self-sustaining, dedicated to perpetuating the Cold War, and it will not tolerate anybody trying to stop it.

OLTMANS: So in the course of your investigation the one after the other person that you investigated turned out to work for the CIA, including Oswald?

GARRISON: Not, yes, but not only that, not only has every individual turned out to be Central Intelligence Agency, what with the exception of a small handful in Dallas that were individuals previously working with the CIA, but in every other case they are Central Intelligence Agency employees. But actually what you had operating here for the most part was a clique or group a part of them connected with the CIA operation in New Orleans with regard to Cuba. And that operation was -- had apparently operated out of the old post office building by Lafayette Square across from Guy Banister's office because all the young men end up with keys to the post office boxes and they don't get any mail -- the kind of role they have in life. So obviously it became apparent that the post office box keys, the numbers that they had, not only Lee Oswald but a number of others were excuses to go to the post office building and then what you had on the second floor up the stairs were Office of Naval Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency offices in connection with the Cuban operation.

So across one street you had Guy Banister's office out of whose office David Ferrie was operating, and then back of another street on the other side of the post office you had the Reilly Coffee Company where Lee Oswald was working. So pretty soon we realized that there was a complex of some sort. And then later on, we found other individuals who, for example, in two cases are not even supposed to know Oswald, and testified against him and actually were part of the CIA group. So essentially, it's a kind of CIA team that they diverted from one mission and changed over to another at the same time bringing Oswald in from Russia but was set up before he came back and they just converted his energy and effectiveness to the killing of President Kennedy and I might add employing some Latins in the operation in Dallas who were also CIA employees. But it was a, I'll sum it up by saying, 100% Central Intelligence Agency.

OLTMANS: And you would say the second assassin, there must have been another assassin then?

GARRISON: There are a number of assassins. They -- it was an overkill operation. They were shooting not only from the stone wall and the front

of the President, but the shots were coming also from the picket fence. In other words, the ambush that the Central Intelligence Agency set up guaranteed to see that the President was dead before he reached the hospital. Apparently so that you wouldn't have an injured President able to see what had happened to the country. For example, President Kennedy was already beginning to take steps to change the CIA operation. He had stumbled across the fact that we had unwittingly developed a Frankenstein monster in the country and was about to do something about it. Which of course was all the more reason for them to have done what they did.

OLTMANS: But lots of the proof of the film for instance that was taken of the killing, they are not accessible to you or any to any investigation?

GARRISON: Oh no, no, the Zapruder film is a historic accident.

OLTMANS: That's the film the man took by accident.

GARRISON: By accident -- by accident a man was taking a color film of the President's car as the assassination occurred. And this is a historic accident because it means that you can look at the assassination scene and see the President rounding the corner from Houston onto Elm Street and see all of the shots and see the shooting -- in fact, the whole assassination, clearly -- you can see it in slow motion.

OLTMANS: You have seen the film?

GARRISON: Yes, yes, I have seen the film. I've seen it in New York and I can't say here how I've seen it but I have got an opportunity to see the Zapruder film and I've looked at it many times repeatedly and the reason that the American people will not see the Zapruder film at least not so long as the -- as we have this present -- what shall I say? -- this fascist structure -- that the warfare philosophy in control of our country, the American people will not be allowed to see this film because all they have to do is look at it, you don't have to be a genius, it takes no argument, no words. When you look at it, you see that the President of the United States was shot from the front, and there's no question about it. It's like that, and he's so clearly hit from the front the force almost catapults him out of the back of the car so that any American seeing it would know at a glance the, the entire Warren Commission conclusion was a complete hoax, was absolutely false, and every man on the Warren Commission had to know it was a lie, just as the President of the United States had to know it was a lie. Further proof that the President had to know it was a lie is he would not

(Interference -- then, several sentences by voice in Dutch)

GARRISON: about the U-2, the CIA file on Lee Harvey Oswald. If he's just a lone assassin, if he's just a wanderer, poor little warehouseman who's confused, why are there these files that nobody can look at? The President of the United States has by executive order taken all of this critical evidence and ordered that it be kept secret for 75 years. That means the life time, as a practical matter, of all living Americans. This has got to be the first time in history that the man who profited most from the murder has announced the evidence is going to be kept secret for 75 years. My feeling is that President -- that President Johnson -- that President Johnson is not involved actively in the planning of the assassination of his predecessor. I don't feel that he was, but wouldn't it be nice to know that he was not? In other words, I think that he cannot be allowed to make the decision that the American people can't see this evidence. It's just an unbelievable situation, and he should not be allowed to get away with it. And for my part, I'm going to keep hammering away as long as I can about the fact that the American people should see this, the evidence.

OLTMANS: Sir, I would say that it's surprising that it looks that if nobody in America cares what exactly happened in Dallas in November '63.

GARRISON: I think, if I can put it this way, I think the people care. I think the people care greatly. I think the people care a lot about Jack Kennedy because in a sense he was our last legitimate President. At least his arrival as President was legitimate. But something is wrong with the government of the country. Somewhere along the line power has come to replace morality.

The first indication that this had happened occurred on November 22nd, 1963, in Dallas when they tore off the top of the President's head because they did not like his bringing the country to the brink of peace. This meant that we had reached a new era in which the truth was irrelevant, in which justice was totally irrelevant, and only power meant anything. And the men who investigated this, who ran the FBI investigation, showed that they understood this new morality of power. And the men on the Warren Commission, to the last man, showed that they understood that power had now become more important too. And of course the President of the United States in this and other instances has shown that he considers power to be much more important than the truth. So what we have, I'm afraid, is nothing less than pure fascism. It's concealed, it's not obvious, but you should try and communicate the truth when it conflicts with the interest of the government. It is like dropping a stone in the middle of the ocean. It's unbelievable. But that's what's happened in this country.

OLTMANS: Do you fear for your own life in your investigation?

GARRISON: I don't fear for my life, although to be frank I assume -- I assume that sooner or latter they'll have to do the same thing to me that they

did to the President. As I said before, I think that if a new President comes along and tries to stop the warfare machine, they will tear his head off. And I take it for granted that I won't be around that long but somehow nothing else matters but this. Nothing else matters but bringing out the truth about what they did to John Kennedy -- and not only that, bringing out the truth about what's happened to this country before it's too late. I hope it's not too late.

OLTMANS: Thank you Mr. Garrison.

GARRISON: Thank you.

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